

**American Beginnings:  
The Prehistory and Palaeoecology of Beringia,**

edited by Frederick Hadleigh West (576 pages, December 1996), presents an objective environmental depiction of late Quaternary Beringia, the 1,000-mile-wide land bridge that connected Siberia and Alaska. The 56 contributors to this volume offer a sweeping reconstruction of the environment, biology, and human culture at the time of its discovery and occupation by Siberian hunters more than 12,000 years ago. An essential purchase for Arctic, archaeological, and Quaternary collections. \$75.00. University of Chicago Press, 5801 S. Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. ISBN 0-226-89399-5.

**The Chronicle of the World,** edited by Derrick Mercer (1175 pages, October 1996), presents historical events from 3.5 million years ago to 1995 as if they were written by contemporary news reporters. Numerous illustrations, maps, and chronologies make this a convenient place to get a feel for a particular year. Originally published in English by Chronicle Books in the 1980s, Dorling Kindersley has updated the volume to the Bosnian peace plan. Because of the volume's broad scope, most years after 1780 are featured in two pages, with sparser coverage prior to that. However, it is a superb place for a quick dip into world history. The headlines for each story are intriguing and make this book a good browser: "Barbarians sack Rome," "Germans print the Bible," "Europe's cities: Full of muck and money." \$59.95. DK Publishing, 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. ISBN 0-7894-0334-X.

**Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States** (3 vols., 1996) describes all records held by the Washington area and regional depositories of the National Archives and Records Administration as of October 1994. The records date from pre-federal titles to the present and include linen-paper records of the Continental Congress as well as electronic lists of Vietnam casualties. The arrangement is by government agency; each en-



try includes a history of the record group and a description of the textual records, maps, microfilms, photographs, videos, sound recordings, and databases held. The third volume serves as an index to the first two. \$95.00. U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328. ISBN 0-16-048312-3.

**Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy,**

edited by Annemarie Bean, James V. Hatch, and Brooks McNamara (310 pages, November 1996), examines the effect that minstrel shows had on American ideas about race, class, and gender. Now recognized as America's first popular mass entertainment, blackface minstrelsy was a source of ethnic stereotypes and humor that was freely borrowed and perpetuated by vaudeville, burlesque, the revue, film, radio, and television. The essays gathered here explore the development of early minstrelsy, social commentary in the shows, the music, the humor, the dance, and images of gender and class. Also included are firsthand accounts of minstrel shows, a minstrelsy guide, and examples of jokes, sketches, and sheet music. \$50.00. University Press of New England, 23 S. Main St., Hanover, NH 03755. ISBN 0-8195-5294-1.

**LC Easy 2.0** (Windows/Mac software) trains shelving assistants and shelf readers the basics of Library of Congress classification. The program offers drills in shelf reading and book sorting that allow students to drag-and-drop unsorted books into their proper order. Lessons are written using shelvees' terminology—line by line, digit by digit, nothing before something. This is an effective and entertaining way to get new shelvees up to speed quickly. \$59.95. Specify Windows or Mac. Make checks payable to Mary L. Kish, 222 Forest Home Dr., Ithaca, NY 14850.

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**The NASA Atlas of the Solar System**, by Ronald Greeley and Raymond Batson (369 pages, December 1996), contains maps and charts of planets, satellites, and asteroids based solely on available data from spacecraft missions. Staff at the U.S. Geological Survey in Flagstaff prepared the topographical maps in uniform format with consistent scaling. Geological charts, NASA photographs, and nontechnical commentary complement the maps in this atlas-sized volume. A gazetteer of planetary surface features accompanies the text. \$150. Cambridge University Press, 40 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011-4211. ISBN 0-521-56127-2.

**Placenames of the World: Origins and Meanings**, by Adrian Room (April 1997), reveals the meaning of more than 5,000 names for cities, natural features, countries, and historic sites worldwide. For example, the world's largest atoll, Kiritimati, was discovered by Captain Cook on Christmas Eve in 1777 and was named by him Christmas Island; its current name is a local (Gilbertese) pronunciation of the holiday. The United States is proportionately represented with the rest of the world. In the introduction, Room lays out the principles of placename study and identifies placename classifications and naming patterns. \$65.00. McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. ISBN 0-7864-0172-9.

**Sacred Journeys: An Illustrated Guide to Pilgrimages around the World**, by Jennifer Westwood (223 pages, March 1997), offers insight into the methods and mindsets of those who choose to travel to sacred landscapes, temples, and shrines. Westwood, a British folklorist, outlines the stages common to all of these journeys, and describes more than 40 of the essential routes and sites throughout the world. Modern pilgrimages (Sodo, Atomic Mirror, war graves of the Somme) are covered as well as traditional ones (Lourdes, Mecca, Santiago de Compostela). Plentiful illustrations and excerpts from the writings of pilgrims from many eras and lands make this book an excellent

companion to Colin Wilson's *Atlas of Holy Places and Sacred Sites* (DK, October 1996). \$35.00. Henry Holt, 115 W. 18th St., New York, NY 10011. ISBN 0-8050-4845-6.

**Science and the Environment** (CD-ROM, October 1996) brings together 320 articles published in the online journal *Science and the Environment* during the 1995–1996 school year. The journal summarizes news stories from more than 500 magazines and newspapers on the following topics: biodiversity and wildlife; alternative energy and fuels; marine ecology; waste management and recycling; clean air; climate change and atmosphere; health, population, and agriculture; and clean water. Each article focuses on a narrow topic suitable for ongoing research, such as “Scientists Find Songbirds Affect Health of Forests” or “China Looks to Wind Power to Meet Growing Energy Needs.” Photos, maps, and Web links are also included. The CD-ROM includes an Adobe Acrobat reader that is necessary for reading the articles. Windows, DOS, Macintosh, and Unix platforms are all supported. One copy costs \$24.95 (plus \$2.50 shipping); for a package of five and a teacher's guide, the cost is \$80.00 (plus \$5.00 shipping). Voyage Publishing, 901 N. Columbus St., Alexandria, VA 22314; <http://www.cais.com/publish/>.

**State Fact Finder: Rankings Across America 1997**, by Harold A. Hovey and Kendra A. Hovey (408 pages, February 1997), provides up-to-date statistics on national, social, and economic trends in the 50 states and the District of

Columbia. Data are conveniently organized into 12 subject areas, including population, health, government, education, and crime. Two tables are concerned with libraries: public library holdings per capita in 1993 (Maine and Wyoming are tied for first), and total library operating expenditures in 1993 (New York is first, Arkansas is 50th). Data sources are provided in source notes. \$78.95. Congressional Quarterly Books, 1414 22nd St., N.W., Washington, DC 20037. ISBN 1-56802-296-4. ■

